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ATTENTION TOBACCO GROWERS

In view of the fact that the leaf spot disease of tobacco known as "wildfire" was quite prevalent in this section in the season of 1922, it would be well for tobacco growers in general to use every precaution against its recurrence during 1923. Of the several leaf spot diseases, most of which are bacterial, wildfire is probably the most rapid in its action and the most disastrous in results. The disease is apt to occur first in the seed bed, and it is believed that the seed is the chief source of infection. To prevent infection in the seed bed, it is recommended that the seed be sterilized by soaking for exactly fifteen minutes in a solution of one part corrosive sublimate (bichloride of mercury) to 1,000 parts of water. The solution should be prepared in a glass or wooden vessel. After treatment, the seed must be washed thoroughly in several changes of water and dried quickly, after which it may be sprouted in the usual way or used dry. Corrosive sublimate may be purchased in tablet form at drug stores. One tablet dissolved in one pint of water is approximately one part to 1,000. Seed should be treated in a thin cloth bag. It is well to remember that this substance is a deadly poison if taken internally. As a further precaution, it is well to steam the soil of the seed bed thoroughly, and treat the woodwork with a solution of formaldehyde, one-half pint to 15 gallons of water in a sprinkling can. If steaming cannot be done, the young plants should be treated several times with Bordeaux mixture at the rate of four pounds blue vitriol, 8 pounds hydrated lime and 50 gallons of water.

While the tobacco plant is subject to attack at any stage of growth it seems particularly susceptible to the disease at the time it reaches maturity. No specific remedy for leaf spot diseases is known after they once attack the plants. A liberal supply of potash in the fertilizer tends to increase the resistance of the plants to leaf spot diseases. The several forms of leaf spot disease are known to the farmers of this section under the general name of rust. Seed from a diseased field should not be used, and if a field showed the disease in 1922, tobacco should be planted on another field in 1923.

Geo. W. Harris,
Crop Technologist, U. S. D. A.

